GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1622
ANSWERED ON:08.03.2016
Air Quality Index
Noor Smt. Mausam

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to implement a revised daily data collection mechanism for ascertaining Air Quality Index (AQI) in various cities, especially the metro cities where pollution is causing severe smog and health hazards;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether the Government has sought details from Maharashtra where AQI crossed the 350-mark, stated to be dangerous and hazardous by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB); and
(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) & (b) Air quality is being monitored using continuous or manual monitoring systems. Data from continuous monitoring systems are available on near real-time basis whereas for manual stations with a time lag. The National Air Quality Index (AQI) has been launched by Hon"ble Prime Minister on April 06, 2015. This is the web-based system designed to provide AQI on real time basis considering eight pollutants i.e. Sulphur Dioxide, Nitrogen Dioxide, Lead, Ozone, PM10, PM2.5, Carbon Monoxide and Ammonia for short term (upto 24 hourly) norms as prescribed in the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS-2009). It is an automated system that captures data from continuous monitoring stations without human intervention, and displays AQI based on running average values (e.g. AQI at 6 am on a day will incorporate data for 6 am on previous day to the current day). The AQI is being calculated on average of 24 hourly basis for the criteria pollutants. There are six AQI categories, namely Good, Satisfactory, Moderately Polluted, Poor, Very Poor, and Severe. Each of these categories is decided based on ambient concentration values of air pollutants and their likely health impacts.

CPCB started disseminating the Air Quality Index (AQI) for 10 cities based on the data CAAQM stations. At present, 23 cities are connected to the web-based system of National AQI. They are Agra, Ahmadabad, Bangaluru, Chandrapur, Chennai, Delhi, Faridabad, Gaya, Gurgaon, Haldia, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Kanpur, Lucknow, Mumbai, Muzaffarpur, Navi Mumbai, Panchkula, Patna, Pune, Solapur and Varanasi.

(c) & (d) In Maharashtra, AQI is being monitored in two metro cities namely; Mumbai and Pune with 10 and 9 numbers of monitoring stations, respectively. AQI monitoring is being done through joint program by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune and Municipal Corporation of Grater Mumbai and Pune. It has been observed that the value of AQI sometimes even crosses 300 marks which falls under the category of very poor / severe in Pune whereas in Mumbai it has not crossed 300 marks. Government of Maharashtra has taken note of poor air quality in these metro cities and has organized a stakeholders workshop along with expert organizations like NEERI and IIT Mumbai at Pune on 06.02.2016.

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